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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Food Programme

Extract from the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on its 2013 annual session (18-21 June 2013)

Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session of 2013

Contents

Annual session, 18-21 June 2013

Decision		*Page*
2013/7	Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan	2
2013/8	UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017: advancing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged	2
2013/9	Report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF	3
2013/10	Draft country programme document for Egypt	4
2013/11	Draft common country programme document for Rwanda	4
2013/12	Draft country programme and common country programme documents	4
2013/13	Evaluation	5
2013/14	Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2012 annual report to the Executive Board	7

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2013/7. Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan (E/ICEF/2013/11);

2. *Requests* UNICEF to continue to improve its results reporting, including in the last annual report of the current medium-term strategic plan, as requested in decision 2012/7;

3. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts to enhance results-based management, and in this regard underscores the importance of developing a robust and harmonized results framework for the next strategic plan, 2014-2017, that is clear and simple and demonstrates a complete result chain with expected results at each level;

4. *Acknowledges* the importance of reporting on gender equality results in all focus areas, and reiterates its request to comprehensively integrate these results into the annual report of the Executive Director.

Annual session
21 June 2013

2013/8. UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017: advancing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the consultative and participatory process conducted by UNICEF in developing the draft strategic plan, 2014-2017;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the efforts by UNICEF to include the mandates of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system in the next UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017, requests UNICEF to fully align the next strategic plan, 2014-2017, with these mandates, and further requests UNICEF to continue contributing to discussions with other funds and programmes towards developing a common approach to tracking the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

3. *Welcomes* the proposed structure and framework of the draft strategic plan, 2014-2017, including its proposed set of outcome areas and implementation strategies, as well as the plan's attention to humanitarian action and gender equality, with the expectation that humanitarian action and gender equality will be fully integrated in the strategic plan, recognizing that the exact formulation of the outcomes and implementation strategies is still evolving, and requests UNICEF to prepare a final version of the draft based, inter alia, on the comments and inputs received from Member States during the annual session 2013 of the Executive Board and during the ongoing process which will require further consultations, clarification and amendments, for finalization and approval at its second regular session 2013;

4. *Requests* UNICEF to provide more information, in time for the second regular session 2013, on how results will be achieved, inter alia, by clearly demonstrating how outputs are directly attributable to UNICEF, how outputs and

outcomes are linked, and how risks are assessed and will be managed, as a means to achieve the results;

5. *Welcomes* the structure and approach of the integrated results and resources framework of the draft strategic plan, 2014-2017, while recognizing that the exact formulation of indicators, risks and assumptions in the annex to the draft strategic plan, 2014-2017, is still evolving, and requests UNICEF to prepare a final version of the draft and the annex in consultation with Member States for finalization and approval at the second regular session 2013 of the Executive Board;

6. *Notes* that the exact formulation of the results framework's baselines, milestones and targets in the annex is still evolving, and requests UNICEF to further develop them in consultation with Member States, with a view to their finalization by the annual session 2014 of the Executive Board;

7. *Requests* UNICEF to provide further information, in time for the second regular session 2013, on the way in which the organization will work together and divide labour within the United Nations system, including with other funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system, taking into account their respective mandates, in order to enhance coherence and avoid overlap and duplication, with the aim of improving results on the ground and delivery for programme countries;

8. *Also requests* UNICEF to fully take into account the views of the Member States in finalizing the strategic plan, 2014-2017, and the annex, as well as the integrated budget, 2014-2017, for adoption at the second regular session 2013.

Annual session
21 June 2013

2013/9. Report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2013/12), in line with the end-of-cycle review of the Strategic Priority Action Plan for Gender Equality, 2010-2013, including the presentation of progress, challenges and the way forward;

2. *Takes note* of the significant progress on leadership commitment and inter-agency partnerships, improved planning and reporting processes and greater ownership at the regional and country levels, and notes with concern the shortcomings in the achievement and monitoring of gender-sensitive results, the lack of human and financial resources and the lack of gender expertise;

3. *Requests* UNICEF to develop a new Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2017, aligned with the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017, taking into account the findings, recommendations and lessons learned identified in the end-of-cycle review and the report itself;

4. *Also requests* UNICEF to develop strategies, as part of the new Gender Equality Action Plan, to address each of the challenges identified in the report, such as technical capacity, expertise and resource allocation for gender equality and empowerment of women at the corporate level and at the country level based on the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

5. *Further requests* UNICEF to develop a performance management plan that includes a results framework and a plan for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, as part of the new Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2017, expanding on and in line with the gender-sensitive results and sex-disaggregated indicators that will be included in the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017;

6. *Requests* UNICEF to cost and allocate adequate funds for the new Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2017 and to have this clearly described in the integrated budget;

7. *Also requests* UNICEF to report annually on progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women and on the implementation of the new Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2017, with the first report to be presented at the annual session of the Executive Board in 2014.

Annual session
21 June 2013

2013/10. Draft country programme document for Egypt

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2013/4 to review and approve, on an exceptional basis, the draft country programme document for Egypt at its annual session of 2013;

2. *Approves* the draft country programme document for Egypt (E/ICEF/2013/P/L.3), with the aggregate indicative budget of $12,879,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $32,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period from July 2013 to December 2017.

Annual session
21 June 2013

2013/11. Draft common country programme document for Rwanda

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2012/10 to approve the draft common country programme document for Rwanda at its annual session of 2013;

2. *Approves* the draft common country programme document for Rwanda (DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-WFP/DCCP/2013/RWA/1 and Add.3), with the aggregate indicative budget of $41,250,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $79,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2013-2018.

Annual session
21 June 2013

2013/12. Draft country programme and common country programme documents

The Executive Board

Approves the aggregate indicative budgets for the following country and common country programmes of cooperation:

Region/country	*Period*	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Document E/ICEF/2013/*
Americas and the Caribbean				
Cuba	2014-2018	3 750 000	9 500 000	P/L.2
Eastern and Southern Africa				
Rwanda draft common country programme (see Executive Board decision 2013/11)	2013-2018			DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-WFP/ DCCP/2013/RWA/1/Add.3
Middle East and North Africa				
Egypt (see Executive Board decision 2013/10)	July 2013-Dec. 2017			P/L.3
South Asia				
Bhutan draft common country programme results and resources framework	2014-2018	4 570 000	21 000 000	DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF/ DCCP/2013/BTN/1/Add.3
West and Central Africa				
Benin	2014-2018	26 003 000	43 997 000	P/L.4
Congo	2014-2018	6 145 000	45 000 000	P/L.5
Niger	2014-2018	94 078 000	104 827 000	P/L.6
Nigeria	2014-2017	203 948 000	304 000 000	P/L.7
Togo	2014-2018	17 337 000	53 000 000	P/L.8

Annual session
21 June 2013

2013/13. Evaluation

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on the evaluation function and major evaluations in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2013/13);

2. *Recalls* that the mandate of the evaluation function is to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of UNICEF programmes and interventions as well as the sustainability of results;

3. *Welcomes* the evidence presented in the report of continued strengthening of the evaluation function at the decentralized level, and encourages UNICEF to take further steps to address shortcomings related to evaluation coverage and to the quality of decentralized evaluations;

4. *Takes note* of the key performance indicators tracking the effectiveness of the evaluation system and the administrative data on human and financial resources;

5. *Notes* the positive work to strengthen the skills, capacities and systems of national partners and to strengthen South-South learning;

6. *Welcomes* the preparation of the revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF, consistent with norms and standards developed by the United Nations Evaluation

Group as a professional network of units responsible for evaluation in the United Nations system;

7. *Endorses* the revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF (E/ICEF/2013/14);

8. *Reaffirms* the central role played by the evaluation function in UNICEF;

9. *Emphasizes* that the Evaluation Office will continue to report directly to the Executive Board through its annual report on the evaluation function and that the Director of the Evaluation Office will continue to report administratively to the Executive Director;

10. *Requests* UNICEF to present a written statement providing the management perspective on issues raised in the annual report on the evaluation function, to be made available well in advance of the relevant session of the Executive Board;

11. *Also requests* UNICEF to allocate sufficient resources to the Evaluation Office to be shown in a separate budget line in the UNICEF integrated budget, 2014-2017, to be presented for adoption at the second regular session 2013;

12. *Further requests* UNICEF, while implementing the evaluation policy, to track expenditure for decentralized evaluations and ensure timeliness of management responses;

13. *Calls upon* UNICEF to continue to conduct evaluations of operations at the country level in close consultation with national Governments and other national partners, as appropriate, and to assist Governments and other partners in the development of national evaluation capacities;

14. *Encourages* UNICEF to use national evaluation systems to the extent possible and to continue to incorporate capacity-building mechanisms into programme design and implementation and to ensure that evaluations are responsive to national demand;

15. *Requests* UNICEF to report on steps taken to ensure that relevant evaluation results are systematically considered and used in preparing key policies, strategies and programmes;

16. *Takes note* of the thematic synthesis report on evaluation of humanitarian action (E/ICEF/2013/15);

17. *Appreciates* the presentation and analysis in the report, and looks forward to future thematic synthesis reports, as requested in decision 2012/12;

18. *Requests* UNICEF to present a full management response to the recommendations in the thematic synthesis reports presented to the Executive Board;

19. *Also requests* UNICEF to address key gaps in the evaluation coverage of its humanitarian interventions, while continuing to improve the quality of evaluations in this field.

Annual session
21 June 2013

2013/14. Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2012 annual report to the Executive Board

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2012 annual report to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2013/AB/L.2), the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee 2012 annual report to the Executive Director, and the UNICEF management response to the annual report of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations for 2012 (E/ICEF/2013/AB/L.3);

2. *Welcomes* the ongoing commitment of UNICEF to greater accountability and transparency, and in this regard welcomes the implementation of the decision on public disclosure of the internal audit reports;

3. *Expresses its continuing support* for strengthening the internal audit and investigation functions of UNICEF;

4. *Takes note* of the work undertaken by UNICEF to implement outstanding audit recommendations, and encourages UNICEF to implement urgently the outstanding recommendations that remain;

5. *Notes with appreciation* the increased number of joint audits, encourages UNICEF to work collaboratively with other United Nations development organizations and find opportunities for further joint approaches, and underscores the importance of the review of the harmonized approach to cash transfers, which should provide clear guidance for adequate application of this approach jointly developed by the organizations;

6. *Underscores* the importance of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations for UNICEF and, in this regard, requests UNICEF to assess and ensure that the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations has the level of human and financial resources, based on an assessment of risks facing the organization, to respond adequately to the needs for audit, investigations and advisory services, and requests UNICEF to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for such purposes when the UNICEF integrated budget, 2014-2017, is presented to the Executive Board, with special emphasis being paid to the investigation function;

7. *Takes note* of the implementation by UNICEF of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

Annual session
21 June 2013